

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGRE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15 ICA-11 /109 W
-----031523 240919Z /23

R 231642Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7475
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS

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USEEC

DEPT PASS STR. GENEVA FOR MTN AMBASSADOR MCDONALD.
PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR STRAUSS. ROME FOR AMBASSADOR
GARDNER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, EEC
SUBJECT: MTN - CITRUS

1. AT BOB STRAUSS' REQUEST I CALLED ON AMBASSADOR PLAJA
OF ITALY JUNE 23 TO STRESS POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF ITALY
BEING FORTHCOMING ON CITRUS. I TOLD HIM THAT A BOLD
MOVE BY ITALY GOING EVEN BEYOND ACCEPTANCE OF WHAT WE
BELIEVED TO BE MODEST COMMISSION PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE
ENORMOUS POLITICAL IMPACT IN THE US. I ADDED THAT
STRAUSS WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER HELPING ON SPECIFIC
ITALIAN TRADE PROBLEMS IN RETURN BUT THAT REAL RECIPROCITY
FOR ITALY WAS MORE LIKELY TO BE FOUND IN GENERAL STRENGTH-
ENING OF OUR RELATIONS.

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2. I THEN ADDED THAT I HAD ALSO TALKED RECENTLY WITH
REPS OF AMERICAN CITRUS INTERESTS (SALTZSTEIN OF THE
FLORIDA GROWERS AND ROY UTKE AND BILL QUARLES OF SUNKIST).
BOTH OF THESE AMERICAN GROUPS WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP
MODERNIZE ITALY'S PROCESSING INDUSTRY AND MARKET ITALIAN
PRODUCE. PLAJA IS FAMILIAR WITH THE SALTZSTEIN PROPOSALS

AND HAS BEEN HELPFUL IN THIS RESPECT. AS FOR SUNKIST, I TOLD HIM THAT THEY WERE READY TO HELP BUT WOULD WANT TO WORK WITH AN ORGANIZED PRODUCER OR PROCESSING ASSOCIATION SINCE THEIR PREVIOUS EFFORTS HAD FAILED BECAUSE OF SPLITS WITHIN INTEREST GROUPS IN ITALY. I ALSO POINTED OUT TO PLAJA THAT OUR INDUSTRY'S ANALYSIS WAS THAT WITHOUT MODERNIZATION OF ITALIAN CITRUS INDUSTRY THAT INDUSTRY COULD NOT SURVIVE COMPETITION WITH SPANISH PRODUCTS ONCE SPAIN IS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. I SAID THAT OUR INDUSTRY CONCLUDED FROM THIS THAT ITALY'S INTEREST WOULD BE BEST SERVED BY TOTAL ELIMINATION OF DUTIES AND COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN PRODUCER GROUPS.

3. PLAJA REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED SIGNIFICANCE OF STRAUSS' MESSAGE AND THAT HE WOULD TRANSMIT IT TO ROME. HE HAD TO SAY THAT IN PRESENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD ACT BOLDLY ON CITRUS. IN FACT, UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, HE HAD YESTERDAY IN COREPER SAID "NO" TO THE COMMISSION PROPOSALS. HE FOUND WHAT I HAD TO SAY ABOUT POSSIBLE HELP FROM AMERICAN INDUSTRY TO BE INTERESTING AND REMINDED ME THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD TRIED TO FACILITATE THE SALTZSTEIN PROPOSAL. HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD WAY TO GO BUT HE WAS NOT CONFIDENT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD COME TO SHARE HIS VIEW. HINTON

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